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Good Times for Business Books

Marketing the Library of America • Summer Bookstore Business Survey

An Alex Haley Christmas Story • The Problem with Permissions

Publishers Weekly

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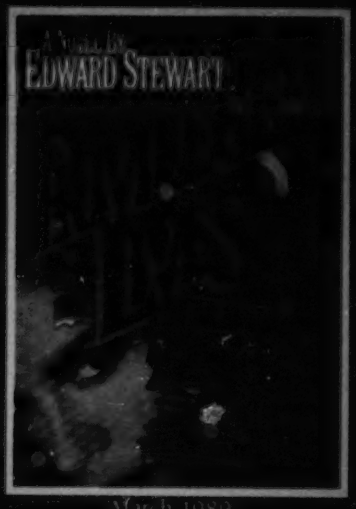

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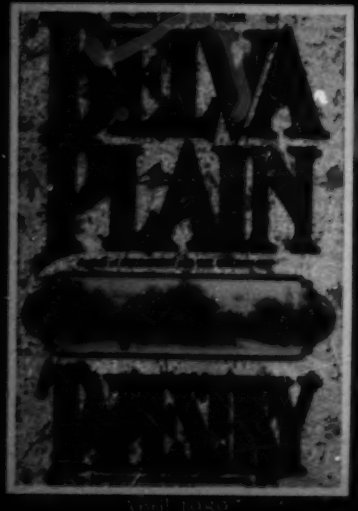

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THE CLOSER YOU LOOK, THE BETTER WE LOOK.

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CROSS CURRENTS

Belatedly we have learned that Edwin Seaver, at one time a well-known literary reviewer for both the mainstream and leftwing press and an editor and vice-president with George Braziller Inc. from 1959 to 1975, died last December at the age of 87 in Paris, where he had lived for a number of years. With his wife Anna Vera Bass he founded the little magazine *1924*, which published William Carlos Williams, Yvor Winters, Waldo Frank and Kenneth Burke, among others. Because of Seaver's connections with *New Masses*, which he helped found, and with the *Daily Worker*, where he was literary editor, he was hauled up before Roy Cohn and the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1955. "I was *not* a member of the Communist Party," he later wrote, "and have always thought it odd that people assumed I was, whereas nobody ever charged me with being a member of the Republican Party when I was writing for the *New York Evening Post* and the *Sun*." George Braziller remembers him as a good friend and a fine novelist (*The Company* and *Between the Hammer and the Anvil*). "But his real strength was in dealing with authors as a working editor," Braziller said. "His tolerance, patience and understanding were remarkable."

Nancy Evans, president of Doubleday, has agreed to serve as mentor to an as-yet-unknown aspiring young woman in publishing. As part of its Mentor Program, Clairol is sponsoring a national search for the aspirant, who will receive $1000 and an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City in January where she will meet Evans at an award luncheon. Mentoring relationships are also being forged in nine other careers: advertising, finance, culinary arts, education, fashion, journalism, law, real estate and small business. Aspirants should send a statement of 100 words or less on the value of mentoring to the Clairol Mentor Program, c/o the National Women's Economic Alliance Foundation, 1440 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

To find out how hot recent media mergers-and-acquisitions activity really is, Henry Ansbacher, the New York investment bank that specializes in such transactions, compared publishing and printing deals with those of two other industries: electronics and banking. Two different periods were studied to show any effect of the October Wall Street crisis. While the number of deals for the media group barely changed, the dollar volume of those transactions soared.

	Aug.-Dec. 1987	Jan.-May 1988
Media Group		
Number of Deals	15	14
Dollar Volume	$4,098,421,000	$13,860,861,000
Multiple of Revenue	2.63	3.71
Electronics Group		
Number of Deals	25	11
Dollar Volume	$7,500,634,000	$969,541,000
Multiple of Revenue	1.06	1.40
Banking Group		
Number of Deals	39	18
Dollar Volume	$5,635,484,000	$3,264,809,000
Multiple of Revenue	1.19	1.29

Senate Actions Address Teaching Of Homosexuality, Science

The U.S. Senate has taken action in two separate appropriations bills to have the federal government step into an area it previously has avoided: the influencing of teaching materials selected by the nation's schools. One amendment addresses the alleged promotion of homosexuality; the other seeks an evaluation of science textbooks.

On an 82–15 vote, Sen. Gordon Humphrey (R., N.H.) won approval on July 27 for an amendment to a bill appropriating funds for the Education Department. The amendment calls for barring usage of any of the funds for teaching materials that appear to promote homosexuality.

The Humphrey amendment states: "Notwithstanding any other provision of this act or amendment thereof, none of the funds made available by this act shall be used in materials, curriculums, or programs that promote or encourage homosexuality, or to use words stating that homosexuality is 'normal,' 'natural,' or 'healthy.'"

Humphrey argued during debate on the amendment that it resulted from use of a federal grant by a clinic in New Hampshire to develop a program to involve male adolescents in family planning activities. He said the curriculum set up with the funds "embarks on an effort which seeks to be 'affirming of gay and lesbian youth' and to 'focus on homophobia as a problem.'"

Opponents, led by Sen. Lowell Weicker (R., Conn.) argued that the amendment was a blatant effort to deny aid to victims of AIDS. Sen. Alan Cranston (D., Calif.) said it "could be interpreted in ways that could chill efforts to educate people in how to avoid the worst health threat that we have known in our times in this country . . . ."

Earlier, while considering an appropriations bill for funds to the National Science Foundation, among other federal agencies, the Senate instructed the NSF in an accompanying report to inform the Senate Appropriations Committee by January 1 on how the federal government can evaluate the quality of teaching materials.

The report said the committee "is concerned over recent reports that textbooks and other teaching materials are less than adequate, despite a substantial federal investment in the creation of science teaching tools. The committee believes that this may be accounted for in part by an institutional failure to objectively evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of teaching materials once they have been developed.

"Consequently, the committee directs the NSF to forward a report to the committee before January 1, 1989, setting forth the steps currently being taken to evaluate the quality of teaching materials, and to promote the use of materials of superior quality. This report should also suggest what additional steps might be taken to improve the evaluation and distribution process."

The Appropriations Committee report about the NSF does not have the force of law, but generally is followed by the executive branch. The Humphrey amendment is attached to legislation that must be reconciled with a separate measure passed earlier by the House. —H.F.

NEW VENTURES

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